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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/644,252	08/20/2003	Thomas Zdeblick	4002-3378/PC242.38	6078
52196	7590	09/28/2006	EXAMINER	
KRIEG DEVault LLP ONE INDIANA SQUARE, SUITE 2800 INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46204-2709				WOO, JULIAN W
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
				3731

DATE MAILED: 09/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/644,252	ZDEBLICK ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Julian W. Woo	3731	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 July 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 19-25,27-29,31,34-45 and 50 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 27-29 and 34-43 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 19-25,31,44 and 50 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 45 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 44 and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Reuther et al. (4,324,550). Reuther et al. disclose, at least in the figures and in col. 1, lines 41-51, a fusion device comprising a substantially solid, unitary, single-piece elongate body (1), external threads (4) extending substantially entirely along the length of the body, a hollow interior (7), at least one opening in communication with the interior (8) where the threads are circumferentially interrupted by a pair of oppositely disposed truncated walls (5 and/or 6) to define a pair of threaded arcuate side walls that are tapered along a substantial portion of the length of the body to define a substantially conical configuration, where the body is formed of a porous biocompatible material (e.g., aluminum-oxide ceramic or carbon-fibers reinforced polyethylene) for permitting bone tissue ingrowth. Note: The introductory statement of intended use ("for facilitating arthrodesis in a disc space between adjacent vertebrae") has been carefully considered but deemed not to impose any structural limitations on the claims patentably distinguishable over the device of Reuther et al., which is capable of being used as claimed if one desires to do so.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. Claims 19-25, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over O'Brien (5,435,723) in view of Kaplan (5,282,861). O'Brien discloses the invention substantially as claimed. O'Brien discloses, at least in figures 1 and 2 and in col. 3, lines 25-45, a fusion device having a substantially solid, unitary, single-piece elongate body (3), external threads (5) extending substantially entirely along the length of the body, a hollow interior (19, 20) and outer walls that are substantially continuously tapered along the length of the body, where the body is formed of a biocompatible material. However, O'Brien does not disclose that the material is a porous, open-celled substrate of a carbonaceous material or carbon foam with an infiltration of a group VB

metal or tantalum. Kaplan teaches, at least in col. 3, line 19 to col. 4, line 46, a material for dental and orthopedic implants that comprises a porous, open-celled substrate of a carbonaceous material or carbon foam with an infiltration of a group VB metal or tantalum. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the material as taught by Kaplan in the device of O'Brien. Such a material would allow a strong, stable structure that mimics the microstructure of cancellous bone, acts as a matrix for the ingrowth of bone, and provides a porosity and surface area for encouraging new bone ingrowth.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 27-29 and 34-43 allowed.
6. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: None of the prior art of record, alone or in combination, discloses a fusion device including, inter alia, an elongate body, a hollow interior, and a pair of oppositely disposed arcuate side walls defining external threads, where the body is tapered substantially entirely along the length of the body, where the body is formed of a porous biocompatible material, where bone growth inducing material is disposed in the interior, where the side walls are arranged substantially diametrically opposite one another, and where the side walls have at least one opening in communication with the hollow interior.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

7. Claim 45 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

8. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: None of the prior art of record, alone or in combination, discloses a fusion device including, *inter alia*, an elongate body, a pair of oppositely disposed arcuate side walls defining external threads, where the body is tapered substantially entirely along the length of the body, where the body is formed of a porous biocompatible material, where device includes a pair of truncated side walls arranged substantially diametrically opposite one another.

As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

Response to Amendment

9. Applicant's arguments filed on July 10, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive: See the rejections above. With respect to arguments regarding the rejection based on the Reuther and O'Brien references: Reuther and O'Brien do indeed disclose devices each with an elongate body that is substantially solid, unitary, and single-piece. The Examiner's arguments as well as the claims are directed solely to the structure of the elongate body and not to other pieces (e.g., an implant support) that

may be attached to the elongate body. Also with respect to arguments regarding the Reuther reference: Reuther does indeed disclose "a pair of oppositely disposed arcuate side walls," albeit the side walls are not substantially diametrically opposite one another.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Julian W. Woo whose telephone number is (571) 272-4707. The examiner can normally be reached Mon.-Fri., 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM Eastern Time, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anh Tuan Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571)
273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Julian W. Woo
Primary Examiner

September 20, 2006